

# DRUG ABUSE: A SEMINAR ORGANISED AT THE GOVERNMENT SECONDARY SCHOOL, ALIERO, KEBBI STATE, NIGERIA AS A COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SERVICE.

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**Drug Abuse:** *A seminar organised at the Government Secondary School, Aliero, Kebbi State, Nigeria as a community development service*

**Summary:** *Drug abuse is the use against its action. It is worst when hard drugs are used and this is common among the youths and schoolchildren resulting in untoward effects and even psychiatric problems and death in severe cases.*

**Key Words:** *Drug, Abuse, Cocaine, Heroine*

## INTRODUCTION

The term “drug abuse” is connotes social disapproval and may have different meanings to different people each society accepts certain drugs as licit and condemns other as illicit<sup>1</sup>. Abuse and addiction have been defined and redefined by several organisations over the past 30 years. The reason for these revisions and disagreements is that abuse and addiction are behavioural syndromes that exist along a continuum from minimal use to abuse to addictive use<sup>2</sup>. Illicit drug use includes the non-medicinal use of a variety of drugs that are inhibited by law. Drug abuse and substance abuse are general terms meaning recurrent use of substances that are illegal or that cause harm to the individual including drugs in sport<sup>3</sup>. Drug addiction involves many psychosocial and some genetic factors as well as neuropharmacological mechanisms. Drug abuse refers to a mal adaptive pattern of use of a substance that is not considered dependent for non-medicinal purpose. It also defined a state, emotional and sometimes physical, characterised by a compulsion to take drugs on a constant basis in order to experience mental effects. Drug abuse gives rise to physical and psychosocial problems. Dependence gives rise to mental, emotional, biological, physical, social, or economic instability.

The incidence of substance use among students is high. It has been suggested that drug and alcohol use during adolescence is usually a social experience and a learned behaviour<sup>4</sup>. There are 21 million victims around the world who abuse

cocaine and heroine and 30 million who abuse amphetamine-type stimulants. Today there are 190 million drug users around the world. Drug use has been increasing among the young worldwide. Most drug abusers are under the age of 30. The illicit drug industry is now estimated to be over \$400 billion per year<sup>5</sup>. People take drugs to change the way they feel, think or behave. These kinds of substances are called psychoactive and cover alcohol and tobacco as well as natural and manufactured drugs. Drug abuse affects most countries in the world, both rich and poor. The problem now crosses national, ethnic, religious and gender lines.

Students many of whom are still in their formative years, transition to adulthood and a period of experimental exploration and curiosity are particularly prone to the many disruptive effects (physical and psychosocial) of drug and alcohol abuse. It is essential to develop educational strategies and materials for drug and alcohol use<sup>6</sup>. One of the important psychosocial phenomenons observed during this period of adolescence is experimentation. This behaviour has been found to lead to trying out new experiences such as drug and sex, sometimes with dire consequences for the adolescents. Pattern of drug use may vary greatly around the world. Drug and alcohol use during adolescence is usually a social experienced and a learned behaviour<sup>4</sup>. The practice of consuming intoxicants by human beings is prevalent among all communities of the world.

## CAUSES OF DRUG ABUSE

It has been observed that much of substance use among youths take place in schools <sup>7</sup>. One of the worst aspects of the current drug problem is that it primarily affects those who are most vulnerable such as the youth. Drug abuse causes and is caused by many problems including unhappiness, crime, divorce, major illness even death. It has been observed that much of substance is among youths take place in schools. The incidence of substance use among students is high <sup>6</sup>. Youth in any society occupy a delicate and sensitive position within the population structure for several reasons. People who abuse drugs come all walks of life, although statistics show that some are more likely to take drugs than others. Recent data raise concern over the increased use of drugs among the young people worldwide. Young people tend to be three or four times higher than among the general population. Some common factors that predispose to drug abuse are Family history, Genetic predisposition although genetic factors contribute to drug seeking behaviour, no specific genes have yet been identified, Reinforcing effects of drugs, Withdrawal effects of craving, Peer pressure, Weak parental control, Child abuse, Truancy among students, Availability of the drugs, Psychosocial distress, To relieve stress, To feel good, and Some have no reason.

## TYPES OF DRUGS ABUSED

Several types of drugs are susceptible to abuse by the youth. These drugs range from most common and less expensive such as cigarettes and alcohol to expensive and more deadly such as cocaine and heroine. The drugs include amphetamine type stimulants, cannabis, cocaine, heroine, and other opioids. Some are inhalants, which are chemicals that cause intoxication when sniffed or inhaled. These are household solvents, aerosols, and gases.

### Drugs of abuse fall into three categories

**Depressants:** Examples are heroine, and barbiturates. Depressants are sedatives, which act on the nervous system, artificial relaxation and relief from anxiety and mental stress tend to produce psychosocial dependence, and withdrawal from heavy use is severe.

**Stimulants:** Examples are cocaine, and amphetamine. Stimulants are agents that activate, enhance, or increase neural activity. They can give rise to symptoms suggestive of intoxication including increased heart rate, papillary dilation, elevated blood pressure, nausea, vomiting and

abnormal behaviour such as fighting, agitation, and impaired judgement.

**Hallucinogens:** Examples are marijuana and ecstasy. Hallucinogens are a chemically drivers group which produce profound mental changes such as euphoria, anxiety, sensory distortion, vivid hallucinations, delusion and depression.

Prevalence of abuse of different drug varies considerably by region and even country throughout the world. Estimates show that cannabis is the most widely abused drug in all parts of the world. Large numbers of young people experiment with cannabis of schoolchildren and young adults in some countries. Overall, cannabis abuse is increasing in many countries while stabilizing in countries where it has reached high levels.

## ADVERSE EFFECTS OF DRUG ABUSE

The effects of drug abuse on an individual form the basis for its cumulative effects on the society. This is the major danger of drug abuse. Alcohol and illicit drugs are harming millions of people in many ways. Drug abuse in secondary schools has its devastating effects in the larger society beyond these schools. The students are unable to continue or complete their studies for reasons directly attributable to the past time of drug abuse. Cocaine and amphetamine first cause tremors, headaches, hypertension, and increased heart rate. Long-term effects are nausea, insomnia, loss of weight, convulsion, and depression. Abuse of Heroine causes nausea and vomiting, slow respiration, dry skin, itching, slow speech and reflex but over a long period, there is the serious risk of developing physical and psychological dependence, which in the end can lead to acute overdose, which can lead to death due to respiratory depression. The signs of hallucinogen use are heightened sensory awareness, hallucinogens, euphoria, increased heart rate, and blood pressure, nausea and vomiting, flashbacks, panic and memory loss. Many chronic drug abusers commonly regarded as addicts often simultaneously suffer from a serious mental disorder. Chronic drug abuse is the habitual abuse of illicit or licit drugs to the extent that the abuse substantially injures a person's health or substantially interferes with his or her social or economic functioning.

## WITHDRAWAL SYMPTOMS

Most drugs of abuse are not only psychologically addictive but physically addictive as well. As the body grows accustomed to the drug, more and more

of it is needed to achieve the same effect. Trying to cut down or stop can result in unpleasant and even dangerous withdrawal symptoms. Withdrawal symptoms of cocaine is agitation, insomnia, anxiety, depression, anger, cocaine cravings, fatigue, nausea, and vomiting, shakes, irritability, muscle pain, depression, sleepiness, and decreased heart rate. The victim of marijuana withdrawal symptoms develops restlessness, irritability, mild agitation, insomnia, nausea, and cramping. Alcohol withdrawal symptoms are alcohol craving, tremor, irritability, nausea, sleep disturbance, increased heart rate, hypertension, and sweating. Withdrawal from heroine and other narcotics are extremely unpleasant with symptoms including muscle and joint pain, fever, nausea, sweats, chills, stomach cramps, and diarrhoea.

### **HARMFUL EFFECTS OF SMOKING**

Smoking accounts for about 10% of death worldwide mainly due to cancer especially lung cancer of which about 90% of cases are smoking related. Smoking can lead to ischemic heart disease and chronic bronchitis. Smoking in pregnancy reduces birth weight and retards childhood development.

### **CONCLUSION**

The transition from adolescence to young adulthood is crucial periods in which experimentation of illicit drugs may begin preventive health educational programmes targeted at young people particularly adolescents are therefore imperative. It is essential to develop educational strategies and material for drug and alcohol. Prevention programmes for this very important high-risk group. School population studies are important for the understanding of the factors associated with substance use in the adolescent population. Illicit use of psychoactive drugs is dangerous for the health of individuals and society. It includes changes in behaviour and emotional status and could cause severe psychological disorders. Marijuana is the most commonly used illicit drug and its use is widespread among adolescents and young adults. Drugs can be harmful in a number of ways though both immediate effect and damage to health overtime.

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